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THE DRUG WAR: VICTORY OR DEFEAT

BY

Lieutenant Colonel Timmie D. Holmes  
United States Air Force

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## **ABSTRACT**

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Following our victory in Southwest Asia and winning the Cold War, we are faced with the many domestic problems confronting our nation. President Bush has stressed the critical importance of the War on Drugs. We are spending large portions of our federal budget to fight the drug problem and significant law enforcement assets are dedicated to the drug war. In 1986 Congress directed the Department of Defense to assist in the fight. Review of the different aspects involved, from illegal production to the impacts on society, show the magnitude of our problem and what we are doing to win the war. Understanding the complexity of the problem indicates that we may win certain battles, but victory is impossible. Because we cannot win the drug war, our fight in the drug war must continue to minimize the impact on society.

## USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

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### THE DRUG WAR: VICTORY OR DEFEAT

### AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

Lieutenant Colonel Timmie D. Holmes  
United States Air Force

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Following our victory in Southwest Asia and winning the Cold War, we are faced with the many domestic problems confronting our nation. President Bush has stressed the critical importance of the War on Drugs. We are spending large portions of our federal budget to fight the drug problem and significant law enforcement assets are dedicated to the drug war. In 1986 Congress directed the Department of Defense to assist in the fight. Review of the different aspects involved, from illegal production to the impacts on society, show the magnitude of our problem and what we are doing to win the war. Understanding the complexity of the problem indicates that we may win certain battles, but victory is impossible. Because we cannot win the drug war, our fight in the drug war must continue to minimize the impact on society.

## **The Drug War: Victory of Defeat**

We fought the war in Vietnam for thirty years and militarily there would be general agreement that we lost the war. Our leadership failed to gain popular support for the war, our strategy and objectives were not well defined, and our political leadership became too involved in the day-to-day operations of the military. The war on drugs could be another Vietnam. Can the nation afford to fight a war that does not offer the opportunity for total victory?

The White House, presenting the National Security Strategy for the United States, clearly states the major threat that the drug trade poses for our society.

No threat does more damage to our national values and institutions, and the domestic violence generated by the trade in drugs is all too familiar. Trafficking organizations undermine the sovereign governments of our friends and weaken and distort national economies with a vast, debilitating black market and large funding requirements for enforcement, criminal justice, prevention, and treatment systems.<sup>1</sup>

Not only does the drug trade affect the national security of the U.S. and our allies, but the forecast for the future demonstrates the necessity for every nation to participate in the war against drugs. The White House further states:

During the 1990s, cocaine traffickers will likely try to develop new markets in Europe--particularly in

light of the impending relaxation of border controls between European Community (EC) countries--and in those nations of East Asia experiencing rapid economic growth. We can also expect increasingly energetic efforts to import cocaine and heroin into the United States, including the use of longer-range aircraft entering U.S. airspace via Canada and of drug-laden cargo containers transhipped to the United States via Europe and the Pacific. Renewed assaults on the U.S. market by increasingly sophisticated traffickers remind us of the need to also attack the drug trade at the source--its home country base of operations.

Such an effort begins with bolstering the political commitment of drug producer and transit countries to strengthen their laws, legal institutions, and programs to prosecute, punish, and--where appropriate--extradite drug traffickers and money launderers.<sup>2</sup>

If we fail to totally eliminate the use of illegal drugs have we lost the Drug War? Ulysses S. Grant and President Lincoln first coined the concept of "unconditional surrender"--the objective for American victory in conflict. During World War II, President Roosevelt further stressed the ideal that to be victorious in conflict our strategy must reflect the requirement for unconditional surrender of the enemy. Is the war on drugs another Vietnam that will be fought for many years and lost, or can we "win"? We cannot escape the effects of the drug trade. As one author from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) states:

If you live today in the United States, or Canada or Western Europe, or almost anywhere else, "Drugs are your problem." If you work in an industry, like

the railroad, that provides a service to the public, and that is entrusted with the safety of large numbers of people, then you have even more cause for concern, and an even greater need to be involved and informed.<sup>3</sup>

To determine if victory is possible it is necessary to analyze our national strategy. Without a thorough understanding of our national strategy it is impossible to determine if we can actually achieve unconditional surrender. In-depth review will demonstrate a viable strategy to prosecute the war on drugs. However, further analysis will demonstrate that total victory is not achievable.

Review of our national strategy is required to better understand the challenges in fighting the "war on drugs." To understand our national drug control strategy it is necessary to divide the drug problem into two areas. First, analyze the supply side of the illicit drug trade and what can be accomplished to significantly reduce availability. To effectively prosecute the war on drugs we must attack the production capability of the various illegal drugs in our society. Production cannot be totally eliminated, so the second phase of the war on supply will be to interdict the supply of drugs between the production and processing level and points of distribution within the U.S. Eradicating the production and interdicting the transportation of illegal drugs will diminish but not eliminate the use of illegal drugs within our society.

The second area of the drug problem is the demand side of the equation and what we can accomplish to lower demand. The most effective way of decreasing the use of illegal drugs within our society is to focus on demand reduction. Our law enforcement agencies must pressure the distribution network while we as a society inform and educate every citizen



of the detrimental effects of illegal drug use.

Because of the difficulty we have had the last few years in fighting the drug war many people believe that the legalization of drugs like marijuana is the answer. Our unsuccessful attempt at prohibition gives credence to the theory of legalization. The British determined that legalization would reduce their drug problems and legalized certain drugs. However, casual and social use of drugs actually lead to further use and later addiction to harder, more potent drugs. A consensus of opinion estimates that the number of British addicts increased greatly since the 1960s, approaching the 100,000 level.<sup>4</sup> This rise in the number of heroin addicts demonstrates that legalization does not, in itself, solve our drug problems. Addiction results in the individual becoming a burden on society because the individual can no longer contribute. Supporting their addiction becomes their only motivation to live. Criminal activity becomes the normal method for obtaining the financial assets to support their drug addiction. Eventually, their addiction will result in long term incarceration for either their illegal activities or due to medical repercussions after long term drug addiction.

To continue the fight, all levels of government must understand the importance of concentrated efforts to control supply and demand. The social impact of drug use is everyones problem. Totally eliminating the illegal use of drugs is impossible. I believe it is a fight we owe to ourselves, but most important it is a fight crucial for our children's future. To dissect the root of the drug problem it is necessary to first examine the supply of drugs. To determine the origin of this threat to our society is the initial step in fighting the drug war. The nations of the world cannot allow

the trafficker to freely produce and distribute his product if they desire to reduce overall supply.

### **The Campaign Against Supply**

Attacking the supply network of illegal drugs is extremely challenging. The 1991 National Drug Control Strategy defines the center of gravity for the drug trafficker is his home base of operation. Our drug control efforts must focus on the drug trade's "center of gravity" if we intend to significantly impact drug supply. The 1991 National Drug Control Strategy further stresses the requirement to strengthen the political commitment of drug producer and transit countries to strengthen their laws, legal institutions, and programs to prosecute, punish, and where appropriate, extradite drug traffickers and drug money launderers.<sup>5</sup> Impacting the international supply of drugs can only be accomplished to any degree with the support and cooperation of the nations involved.

To significantly impact the supply of drugs, we can destroy or greatly lower the production and growth of the plants used to manufacture the drugs. Almost all the cocaine consumed in the U.S. is produced from coca plants grown in the Andes mountains of Bolivia, Peru, and to some extent Columbia. The heroin used in this country is primarily produced from the poppy crop of southeast Asia and Asia Minor. Marijuana in some form or another is grown all over the world. Eradication is extremely challenging due to the geographic characteristics associated with the growth and production of illegal drugs.

The coca growers of the Andes are poor peasant farmers. The

growing of the coca plant provides more economic return for the peasant than any other agricultural crops he could possibly grow in the jungle environment. When individuals are surviving at the poverty level economically, the legal and moral issues associated with the production of cocaine do not offset the need to survive. Additionally, the jungles of the Andes provide an excellent environment for the growth and harvesting of the coca plant. Complicating eradication efforts, the jungle environment makes it extremely difficult to locate the areas where the plant is grown. It is challenging and in some cases impossible for local law enforcement agencies and military forces to eradicate the coca plant in these areas. To encourage the peasant farmers to produce bananas or coffee while minimizing the economic effects of lower financial return several local governments are providing government crop subsidies. Subsidy programs have made some progress, however, the local and federal governments of the Andes region appear to not have the fiscal assets or the political will to provide adequate agricultural subsidies to the peasant farmers without significant support from the U.S..

Our country's responsibility in controlling the supply of drugs continues with reducing the production of cocaine. Politically, we cannot strategically move a large military force into the area to assist in the eradication of the coca plant or the laboratories that process the coca paste into cocaine. We can, however, provide monetary support, equipment, and training for law enforcement personnel involved in their fight to reduce the production and supply of illegal drugs. As the local government's law enforcement capabilities strengthen, the production of cocaine will become more difficult. Local governments must be encouraged to punish drug

producers and traffickers. Through added strength and training, each local government is better equipped to punish drug traffickers within their own judicial system. Additionally, we can establish procedures to extradite certain elements of the drug trade, the so called drug lords, to be processed through our legal system. These efforts must work together to increase the risk of judicial action for individuals involved in cocaine production and trafficking.

Heroin eradication presents even greater problems than eradication of cocaine. The majority of the heroin entering the U.S. originates in the Golden Triangle of the far east. The governments of that area lack the power to significantly impact the heroin production in their own countries. For the last thirty years the heroin trade has flourished in this area of the world. Corruption of law enforcement officials and government officials makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for any actions that would significantly reduce the heroin production in this area. To further complicate any attempts to disrupt the heroin production, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) estimates that the drug lords of this area have an armed force of 30 to 50 thousand men.<sup>6</sup> This armed force is well equipped and can challenge any attempt to introduce force into the Golden Triangle. Lessons learned from Vietnam demonstrate the futility of fighting in this area of the world against a force that can easily melt into the general populace.

The current agreement we have with Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia demonstrates the arrangement required on the international level to significantly impact the drug trade. This Andean Strategy supports our efforts to decrease the supply of drugs to the United States. By providing

financial support and technical expertise we can apply pressure to the drug trade's center of gravity while not threatening the sovereignty of individual nations. To fund the continuation of the Andean Initiative the administration is seeking almost \$500 million in Fiscal Year 1992, \$214 million in law enforcement and security assistance, and \$285 million in economic assistance.<sup>7</sup> Fighting the drug war is going to be expensive if we desire to have an effect on the supply of drugs.

Just considering the Andean Strategy demonstrates the costs involved with attempting to reduce the supply of illegal drugs to the U.S.. Similar initiatives should be implemented to decrease the production of opium in the Golden Triangle of the Far East. Other geographic areas that have the potential for coca leaf production must also be considered so that we do not concentrate our efforts solely in one area and allow the drug trade to simply relocate to another region or nation.

Reducing the supply of drugs at the production level will reduce the volume of drugs available. However, we cannot totally eliminate the supply of drugs at the point of origin. We must also attempt to interdict the shipment of illegal drugs. Currently Mexico is the primary transit point for drugs destined for the U.S. market. Almost all the cocaine entering the U.S. and externally produced marijuana transits Mexico prior to reaching the illegal markets of the U.S.. The recent improved cooperation of the Mexican government has been encouraging. Mexican seizures of drugs have risen to unprecedented levels--approximately 48 metric tons of cocaine and 446 metric tons of marijuana in the first 11 months of 1990.<sup>8</sup> The vast territory of Mexico and the length of the border between Mexico and the U.S. make the interdiction of drug trafficking extremely challenging. Close

cooperation between law enforcement agencies will greatly enhance our ability to interdict the shipment of illegal drugs into our country. The lack of interagency cooperation internally, and with Mexican law enforcement agencies, significantly reduce the effectiveness of efforts to interdict the movement of illegal drugs across U.S. borders and into our society.

Mexico's commitment to fighting the drug war is impressive. They are currently devoting two-thirds of their army's operating budget to counternarcotics operations. Their efforts the last year have been restricted to some degree due to certain equipment, normally used by U.S. forces to assist Mexican agencies, being diverted to Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Mexico fully understands the necessity to fight the drug war. Drug trafficking is considered a threat to Mexican sovereignty and drug cartels a greater threat to regional security than the threat of communism ever was during the Cold War.<sup>9</sup>

Heroin shipment into the U.S. requires a different focus by our enforcement agencies. Large amounts of the heroin entering the U.S. transits through Canada prior to delivery to U.S. drug distribution networks. Large quantities also arrive by being concealed in the massive number of commercial shipments arriving daily into our East Coast and West Coast seaports. The ability of law enforcement agencies to interdict shipment of heroin is limited by their ability to thoroughly inspect the volume of commercial shipping containers entering our seaports daily. Manpower and finances inhibit our law enforcement agencies from inspecting all commercial arrivals and we must depend upon our intelligence agencies for information leading to seizure of illegal shipments by U.S. Customs inspectors in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies.

The latest method for delivering heroin to New York City has provided some new challenges for our law enforcement agencies. The drug business recruits individuals from poverty areas of Africa to deliver their product to the U.S.. Over the last couple of years we have seen a significant increase in the number of Nigerian nationals being apprehended entering the U.S. in possession of heroin. These individuals are ingesting a pound to a pound and one half of heroin and then traveling to the U.S. to deliver their shipment. These human couriers transporting illegal drugs into the U.S. are difficult to identify and apprehend when they arrive at one of our busy international airports. Once they are taken into custody, law enforcement agencies must deal with the complex problem of holding the individuals until they produce their illegal cargo. Another sad aspect of this method of shipping illegal drugs into the U.S. is the terrible deaths of the couriers when their internal cargo is improperly packaged. However, the fiscal rewards provided to the desperate couriers more than offset the risks of apprehension or inadvertent death.<sup>10</sup>

Border interdiction and security are the responsibility of the federal government and requires the resources, capability and national scope of the federal government. Effective border interdiction of the flow of drugs will significantly hamper the drug trade.

Disruption of drug trafficking operations raises the traffickers' cost of doing business by forcing them to take expensive countermeasures: using longer and more circuitous routes; training new personnel to replace those apprehended; purchasing sophisticated electronic equipment to detect law enforcement surveillance; developing new

concealment techniques; replacing expensive seized assets; and stockpiling drugs closer to the production area, thus making them more vulnerable to foreign law enforcement efforts.<sup>11</sup>

The President's drug Czar serves as the focal point at the executive level for fighting the drug war. To coordinate the efforts of federal, state, and local agencies in fighting the drug war the DEA has been designated as the agency to bring law enforcement agencies together. At the federal level some of the agencies involved include: the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Customs Service, U.S. Coast Guard, Internal Revenue Service, Narcotic and Dangerous Drug Section, National Institute on Alcohol, Office of Drug Abuse Policy, National Narcotics Border Interdiction System, and the Department of Defense. In addition to all the federal agencies involved in fighting the drug war, we also have thousands of state and local agencies involved at their level with their inherent problems of limited manpower and insufficient funding. It is easy to see why we have difficulty in coordinating activities and agencies' efforts appear disjointed and ineffective.

The military's involvement in the drug war occurred in the late 1980s. Congress observed the lack of cooperation and ineffective performance of federal agencies in stemming the flow of illegal drugs into the U.S.. Congress believed that the military provided the capability to coordinate efforts of all federal agencies and could bring the massive might of U.S. military manpower and equipment to the drug war. On 11 September 1986, the House of Representatives enacted H.R. 5484. This bill, the "Defense Narcotics Act of 1986" charged the President to:



(1) apply the full measure of the executive power of the President against the introduction of controlled substances into the United States; and

(2) to that end, should take such steps as may be necessary and appropriate (including the deployment of radar, aircraft, and military personnel) to expand the role of the Armed Forces in the war on illegal drugs.<sup>12</sup>

Congress also tied to the bill an authorization for new equipment to assist the military in fighting the drug war. They authorized the military to spend \$40 million for Blackhawk helicopters, \$83 million for additional radar platform aircraft, and \$90 million for balloon-borne search radar platforms known as Aerostats. The Department of Defense was to purchase this additional equipment out of existing funds since Congress did not appropriate any additional funding for the military to utilize in the acquisition of the additional assets.

Congress further defined the mission of the military. The military's mission was to seal the borders of the U.S. and stop the flow of drugs into our society.

Within 30 days after enactment, President to deploy Armed Forces sufficient to halt the unlawful penetration of borders by aircraft and vessels carrying narcotics. Such equipment and personnel shall be used to locate, pursue, and seize such vessels and aircraft and to arrest their crews. Military personnel may not make arrests of crew members of such aircraft or vessels after the crew members have departed the aircraft or vessels, unless the military personnel are in hot pursuit.

President ordered to "substantially halt the

unlawful penetration" of U.S. borders by drug smugglers within 45 days after enactment, 60 days later he is to report to Congress the effect on military readiness of the drug interdiction program and the equipment, personnel, needed to restore readiness.<sup>13</sup>

H.R. 5484 never became law, but signaled to the executive branch that the nation's resources would be needed to prosecute the war against drugs. Congressional intent was very clear. Use the military and stop the flow of drugs across our borders. Congress believed that with applying the military to the drug war we could quickly obtain victory. Sadly, Congress did not understand the complexity of interdicting the shipment of drugs across our borders. Even in the legislation, Congress diluted the power of the military by limiting their power to arrest drug traffickers. One of the biggest problems facing our nation in dealing with drug traffickers is our belief in individual rights and freedoms. If Congress truly wanted to win the drug war, we would have to sacrifice many of the freedoms which this nation was founded upon. Although Congressional intent was heroic, the military cannot win the drug war. The military can provide valuable assistance to other federal agencies involved in the war on drugs by providing technology and manpower for improving intelligence efforts plus we can provide important education and training to law enforcement agencies involved in the fight against drugs.

The challenge of interdicting the drug trade at our borders is huge and requires the efforts of numerous governmental agencies working together to be effective. The amount of coastline, land border, and airspace that must be patrolled makes interdiction of the drug trade seem almost impossible.

In 1986, the then Secretary of Defense, Casper W. Weinberger, when asked a question about the military's capability to seal our borders to the drug trade, stated:

....that is about 290,000 registered and 4,000 unregistered general aviation aircraft, plus a great many commercial aircraft. We would have to intercept anything we didn't have adequate intelligence to go on. We would have a continuous 4,000 mile naval blockade of the coastline. We'd have to be able to intercept 160,000 documented, registered vessels and about 1/4 registry vessels which arrive each day at U.S. ports. We'd have to maintain a continuous radar surveillance. We'd need 32 additional E-2Cs for the Navy or the continuous use of 25 AWACS. This would have a rather adverse effect on our ability to carry out other missions all over the world. Also, without adequate intelligence, we wouldn't have any idea whether any of these 290,000 planes or whatever were actually carrying narcotics.<sup>14</sup>

To effectively control the entry of illegal drugs into the U.S. will take massive efforts and cooperation from many agencies. The Border Patrol, Customs Service, Coast Guard, and military are probably the major players in controlling our borders. To be successful each agency must totally cooperate and other agencies must freely provide information. Our current program has demonstrated success intercepting the movement of large quantities of illegal drugs. However, our capability could be drastically improved if command and control were centralized and means made available to prevent the competitive mode of current operations. Our current process for individual enforcement agencies obtaining federal

funding and the division of so called ``spoils`` of the drug war is detrimental to the cooperation between governmental organizations involved in the war against drugs.

We are making progress, because the supply of illegal drugs to traffickers in the U.S. is increasingly more difficult to accomplish. Pressure on the supplier at the production level plus interdicting the transportation network will complicate the suppliers ability to function. However, we must also localize our war on drugs by attacking the problem closer to home. We must reduce the demand for illegal drugs. Reduction in demand will force the supplier to search for newer, more expensive markets which will then provide us additional opportunities to further impact his ability to function.

### **The Campaign Against Demand**

Just as important as controlling the supply is controlling the demand for illicit drugs. There would be no need for drug trafficking if there were no demand for drugs. We must reduce drug useage in our schools, our neighborhoods, and in the workplace.

Drug education programs in our schools can make a difference. A recent survey by the Pennsylvania Governor's Drug Policy Council said high school students are less likely to use cocaine and marijuana than they were two years ago. The findings showed a 29 percent decline in cocaine use and a 21 percent decrease in marijuana use by high school seniors.<sup>15</sup> The State and Local Grant program under the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act continues to be the primary federal governmental vehicle for improving drug

education in the Nation's classrooms and the President's budget for 1992 sought \$498 million for the program.<sup>16</sup> The drug education of our youth will make the largest impact on the demand for drugs. By convincing our young citizens at an early age, of the pitfalls of even occasional drug use, we can prevent present and future related problems with drug use.

One of the most effective programs to educate our youth has been "Project DARE" (Drug Abuse Resistance Education). The U.S. Department of Justice fully supports Project DARE and encourages all educational systems to take part in the program.

Project DARE is a substance use prevention education program designed to equip elementary school children with skills for resisting peer pressure to experiment with tobacco, drugs, and alcohol. This unique program, which was developed in 1983 as a cooperative effort by the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles Unified School District, uses uniformed law enforcement officers to teach a formal curriculum to students in a classroom setting. Project DARE gives special attention to fifth and sixth grade students to prepare them for entry into junior high and senior high school, where they are most likely to encounter pressures to use drugs.<sup>17</sup>

If we are going to win the drug war, programs like Project DARE will make the largest impact on the demand for drugs. DARE targets elementary school children hopefully before they have used drugs. Junior high and senior high school drug education programs have come too late in the educating our youth on the evils of drug use. The earlier we can educate our youth, the better they can resist peer pressure to become involved with illicit drugs.<sup>18</sup>

Recent indicators demonstrate that we may be making progress in lowering the demand for illegal drugs. The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse released on 19 December 1991 indicates that the number of current users--people who used drugs in the last month--dropped to 12.6 million. Compared to 1990 when they reported 12.9 million current drug users and in 1988 they reported 14.5 million, we appear to be making progress in lowering the demand for drugs.<sup>19</sup> Even with the decrease in the number of drug users, a large proportion of our society continues to use illegal drugs providing the opportunity for large financial rewards for the drug trafficker.

Drug use and addiction are not solely confined to the inner city and the poorer segments of society. All American basketball player Len Bias, following his highly successful college career and after being drafted by the Boston Celtics, overdosed on drugs and subsequently died. Bias had a very successful National Basketball Association career to look forward to and still could not resist the physical and psychological addictive powers of illegal drugs.

More recently we observed the suspension of Otis Nixon of the Atlanta Braves during the last month of the 1991 baseball season. Nixon had previously tested positive for drug use and was fully aware of the consequences if he failed another drug screening. At the height of his career, even the probability of the Braves reaching the World Series did not prevent Otis Nixon from making the mistake of using illegal drugs. The addictive nature of illicit drugs overrides the judgement and reasoning power of even our most successful members of society. The use of illicit drugs allows the individual to escape from the pressures of their

environment while they suppress the negative aspects and repercussions of illegal drug useage in our society.

Even more recent headlines discuss the recent alleged drug problems of New York Yankee pitcher Steve Howe. Following a highly publicized comeback from drug use and suspension from baseball, it appears that Howe could not resist the addictive powers of illegal drugs. Risking permanent suspension from baseball, Steve Howe still allowed the psychological need for drugs to overcome rational thought and behavior. The downfall of Mayor Barry recently in Washington, D.C. demonstrated that the drug problem permeates our society. Drug problems do not just affect the poor and down trodden. Doctors, lawyers, successful businessmen, professional athletes, and government leaders becoming involved with illegal drugs demonstrates the extent drug useage has spread through our society. Educating our society cannot concentrate on any specific segment of our population. Drug use permeates our society from the poorest, uneducated to the very successful individuals with prospects for highly successful careers and lives.

Although the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse indicated that overall drug abuse appeared to be on a downward trend, disturbing trends continue to be reported. The number of people 35 and older using drugs has increased. Inner-city emergency rooms saw an increase of 24 percent in drug related cases compared to suburban emergency rooms only reporting a three percent increase. There was a significant increase in the number of blacks and hispanics being admitted to hospital emergency rooms for drug related health complications. These trends indicate that our drug problem is shifting to the inner city. The inner city infrastructure and population

cannot afford increased drug problems. An increased focus on amounts of our drug demand reduction efforts in the inner city will be needed to stop this trend.<sup>20</sup>

To reduce the demand for drugs in our neighborhoods the entire community must become involved. Local organizations, churches, law enforcement agencies, parents, etc., must work together if we are to lower demand. Programs organized to provide treatment for the drug abuser will help. Only through education can our population be aware of the evils and risks involved with drug abuse. The risk of AIDS, and the mother giving birth to a drug addicted baby both demonstrate the terrible results of drug addiction. Our national strategy involves providing federal funding for numerous community level drug prevention initiatives and programs. The President's budget proposal for 1992 requested \$1.7 billion to support these efforts.<sup>21</sup>

The National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates that 68 percent of all illegal drug users are employed either full- or part-time.<sup>22</sup> Illegal drug use in the workplace causes many problems. Safety risks rise, significant loss of productivity occurs, theft increases, and overall production costs rise with significant lowering of profits. These impacts are subsequently passed on to the consumer. Additionally, the businesses' ability to compete is impacted and in some cases could even drive the company out of the marketplace entirely.

Our legal system plays a critical role in reducing the demand for drugs. However, before the legal system can make a significant impact we will have to provide the federal support necessary to unburden our system. We must provide additional support for our law enforcement agencies, the



judicial system, and our ability to incarcerate the drug producer and trafficker.

Our legal system needs to be overhauled. More often than not we don't always make the punishment fit the crime. The system lacks simplicity while still protecting individual rights. Other nations around the world firmly believe that capital punishment is a deterrent to criminal activity. Recent executions in communist China demonstrate their conviction to deter drug abuse.

The official New China News Agency reported that 35 drug dealers were sentenced to death in the city of Kinming and executed shortly afterward. About 40,000 people attended the sentencing rally, in which the felons were paraded around and condemned to die.

The executions are normally carried out in a field, off-limits to the public. An offender is made to kneel with his hands tied behind his back, and a police officer fires a single bullet into the back of the person's head.

The sentencing rallies and reports of the executions are clearly intended to warn young people to stay away from heroin, which has been spreading rapidly through southern China.<sup>23</sup>

Although extreme, when compared to western standards, we can argue that their approach should discourage drug trafficking. It would indicate that we should possibly restructure our system and mandate certain tougher punishments for drug trafficking to discourage criminal activity. We have flooded our prison systems with drug offenders while not significantly impacting the drug trade. Although we need to continue to incarcerate drug

offenders, we must severely punish the major drug traffickers. Our current system does not serve as a deterrent. The chance that the drug trafficker will be caught and eventually incarcerated is still too small.

One federal anti-drug program that has had detrimental effect on the drug trade has been the asset seizure and forfeiture program. The asset seizure and forfeiture program has significantly impacted the drug trade by allowing law enforcement agencies to seize property used in the sale and distribution of illegal drugs. The program allows state and local law enforcement agencies to share the spoils of the anti-drug program. In 1991 the federal government transferred \$240 million to state and local law enforcement agencies.<sup>24</sup> However, the program also places agencies in competition with each other. Competing for critical funds results in agencies periodically resisting cooperative programs for fear of losing the "spoils of war."

The capability to be truly effective in fighting the drug war at the local level is hampered by our judicial and correctional systems. Our systems are already overburdened, and the impact on society to fight the drug war is immense. Criminal prosecution and incarceration are strong deterrents to crime and a step in decreasing the demand for drugs. Our current system is unable to keep up. Our national strategy supports efforts to improve our system but is insufficient to make significant progress. Increased funding for federal agencies involved in the drug war will help. Programs to lessen the burden on our judicial system and our already full prison system must be initiated. Many efforts are ongoing to increase capacity, improve prison drug programs, and punish prisoners involved with drugs within our prison facilities. New laws to establish tougher penalties

for specific drug related crimes need to be in place. We must get tougher if we wish to make a significant change.

### **Conclusion: We Must Fight**

No longer do national rivalries result in global threats but new threats are facing our nation. The dismantling of the Soviet Union, unification of Germany, and freedom and democracy taking root throughout the world have significantly changed our environment. Threats to our environment, state sponsored terrorism, and the trafficking in narcotics becomes the threat of the 1990s. Robert M. Kimmitt, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, United States Department of State in a recent speech before the American Bar Association best addressed the problems of narcotic trafficking.

These problems transcend national borders and affect all nations--developed or developing, rich or poor, without regard to geography, religion, or form of government.

At a time when Americans are helping to nurture the seedlings of freedom and progress, Americans, through a seemingly insatiable demand for drugs, nurture the epidemic of violence and the deterioration of values that indelibly mark the narcotics trade.

American drug use contributes to the corruption of foreign government officials; to deaths of Columbian judges, law enforcement officers, and journalists; and destruction of the environment in drug producing areas.<sup>25</sup>

Secretary Kimmitt has described the enormous ramifications of the

drug trade. If we do not attempt to reduce the supply of drugs and lower the demand for drugs we will impose long term costs on our society and especially on our children who will inherit our world. No longer is drug use isolated to life's losers but permeates our entire society. The challenge before us is to make every attempt to stop people from using drugs. The impact on their lives will burden our society for centuries if we do not lower demand.

Will our National Drug Strategy win the drug war? Review indicates that we will fight the war on all fronts. However, just as we fought the Korean War, the drug war is truly a "limited war." Total victory will never be achieved. Our basic belief in individual rights provides protections for the drug trade to exploit. The devastating impact of drug use mandates that we fight the war even after determining that total victory is not achievable. Except in isolated instances, we cannot even gain the upper hand by concentrating all of our forces against a single segment of the drug trade. The biggest single challenge to our leadership and the world is to insure that we continue to attack the drug trade starting at the production site and follow through to the user of drugs. We cannot win--we must continue the fight.

It was a twin-engine Beech Captain Winters saw, the most common aircraft used by the druggies....He pulled his F-15 level behind it, about a mile back. This was the eighth time he'd intercepted a drug runner, but it was the first time he'd been allowed to do something about it....When he got within four hundred yards, his finger depressed the button for a fraction of a second. A line of green tracers lanced through the sky. Several rounds appeared to miss the

Beech ahead, but the rest hit right in the cockpit area. He heard no sound from the kill....Winters reflected briefly that he had just killed one man, maybe two. That was alright, they wouldn't be missed.

From "Clear and Present Danger" by Tom Clancy<sup>26</sup>

Our belief in democratic principles and the right to due process prevents us from using Tom Clancy's fictional method for preventing the movement of illegal drugs across our borders. Rather than the introduction of force we must work with our friends and allies to reduce the supply of drugs. Our financial support is critical to fighting the drug war in South America. Additionally, we must fight the drug war here at home. Strong law enforcement efforts to arrest and convict the drug trafficker is a step in the right direction. We must increase the risk of incarceration to deter the criminal element of our society.

We will not eliminate the supply of illegal drugs as long as there is a demand for drugs in our society. Additionally, as long as we protect individual rights and freedoms, we will not be able to stop the flow of drugs across our borders or remove the drug dealers from our streets. The only way we will ever win the drug war is by the reduction of the demand for drugs. We must educate our youth so that they will not succumb to the evils of drug use and destroy their lives like the millions of drug users in our society today. Total unconditional victory may not be possible, but we cannot accept defeat!

## **ENDNOTES**

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